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CBC Newsletter

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For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

Volume 59 February 2013 Number 1

It May Be Winter… But Imagine Spring in the Blue Ridge! Announcing the Spring Meeting in Asheville, NC

Asheville in the spring is a great place to be! The area offers a rich diversity of habitats from spruce-fir forests at high elevations down to cove hardwood woodlands in valley bottoms. The area provides nesting habitat for northern and southern birds, and dozens of other species pass through during spring migration. The CBC 2013 Spring Meeting will be held in Asheville, North Carolina on May 3-4. There will be many field trips to all the birding hot spots in the area such as Jackson Park, Curtis Creek, Hooper Lane, Mt. Mitchell, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. The CBC Spring meeting was last in Asheville in 2006 when we finished with 148 species, including 31 species of warblers.

We'll be staying at the Crowne Plaza Tennis & Golf Resort located on One Resort Drive in Asheville, just one mile from downtown. The 125-acre resort offers complimentary amenities that include an on-site fitness and wellness facility with an 8,500 square foot fitness center, group fitness classes, indoor saltwater lap pool and indoor and outdoor tennis courts. You may also want to take advantage of the Adelaide Spa, the newly redesigned 9-hole, par 34 golf course, or Asheville's only zip-line canopy adventure. The resort is near all major Asheville attractions like the Blue Ridge Parkway, Biltmore House, NC Arboretum, Pisgah National Forest, and is convenient to UNC-Asheville and the River Arts District. The resort offers a shuttle to the downtown area for a small fee if you want to browse around Asheville's unique art galleries, restaurants, shops and breweries.

We were able to negotiate a significant discount from the resort's normal rates. Double rooms are $99 plus tax, king rooms are $109 plus tax, and king executive suites are $129 plus tax. These rates will also apply three days before and after our event. Rooms feature private balconies, mini refrigerators and high-speed internet.

The Crowne Plaza Resort has provided a customized website for CBC meeting attendees. You can go to this website to make reservations and learn more about the resort: https://resweb.passkey.com/go/CBC2013MAY

You can also call 888-233-9527 for reservations, 7 days, 7 a.m.–11 p.m. through April 2 and mention the group code **CBC**. After April 2, 2013, the website link will no longer be active, and you must call 800-733-3211 Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. for reservations assistance. Reservations made after April 2, 2013 will be on a space available basis at the prevailing rate, which may be higher than the contracted group rate.

Be sure to check the next Newsletter for more information and field trip details. We hope to see you there!

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Lake Mattamuskeet Improvements

Long known as one of the state's premier winter birding hotspots, Lake Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge in Hyde County, NC is now even more attractive to birders as a result of recent improvements.

Visitors used to spartan facilities now enjoy a new visitor center with wildlife displays, informational exhibits, and staffers that can provide current refuge information. There are also indoor bathrooms (no more relying only on portable potties!)

Inside the new visitor center

The changes outside are even better! As a result of canal dredging, the margins of the Wildlife Drive, a five-mile gravel road leading along the south shore of Lake Mattamuskeet, are now open and provide better viewing of the canal and adjacent tree lines, as well as providing habitat for a variety of sparrows. Not to be missed on the Wildlife Drive is the spur road leading past the boat ramp to waterfowl blind number one. The view from this narrow peninsula jutting into the lake is incredible, and there are often large numbers of swans, ducks, and geese visible, even at times when the waters along the Highway 94 causeway appear unproductive.

Farther down the Wildlife Drive are opportunities to view passerines, Wood Ducks, and from short paths leading to the lakeshore, more swans, ducks, and geese. At the end of the Drive a new boardwalk leads to excellent views of a freshwater cattail marsh and pond. King and Virginia Rails, along with Eastern Screech Owls, can often be heard here. Driving back toward the visitor center and pump station, visitors should keep an eye out for bear, deer, and even the occasional bobcat.

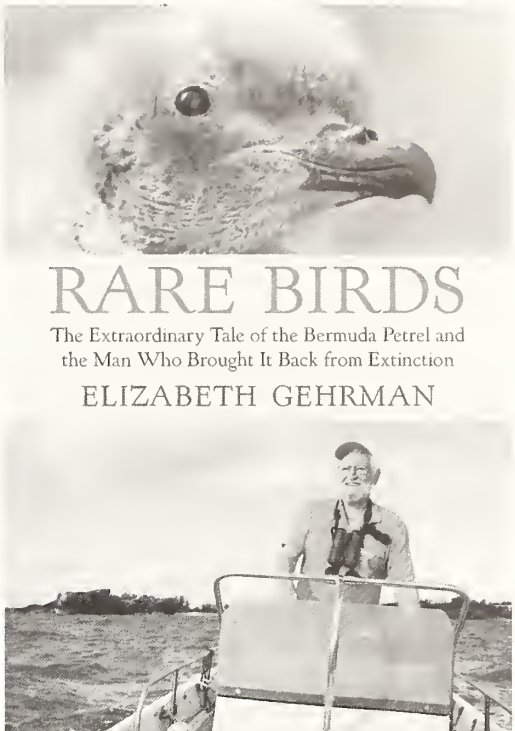
Birders used to viewing the waterfowl impoundment that lies to the south of the entrance road from NC 94 will no doubt be pleased to know that they can now circumnavigate the marsh on a gravel road that leads along the south edge and back to NC 94. This enhanced access allows for much better views of the birds that use this area for feeding and roosting.

One of North Carolina's best birding sites is now even better due to enhanced access to productive birding areas and the new visitor center. The next time you find yourself in Eastern North Carolina, take some time to explore old favorite areas at Mattamuskeet and see some of the new features. I think you'll be glad that you did! *-Steve Shultz*

Birder's Book Review

Steve Shultz

Rare Birds: The Extraordinary Tale of the Bermuda Petrel and the Man Who Brought It Back from Extinction
Elizabeth Gehrman
ISBN 978-0-8070-1076-1, 240 pages, hardbound
2012, Beacon Press, $26.95



While the title may be somewhat unwieldy, *Rare Birds* was an absolute delight to read. Sure, I was aware, as are many, that the Bermuda Petrel breeds in Bermuda, there are not many of them, and they were thought to be extinct for quite some time until a couple were seen flying around some uninhabited islets among the dozens and dozens sprinkled across the Bermudian archipelago. I probably presumed that someone, or a group of someones, maybe an NGO, stepped in and put up a few fences to keep out the rats and everything was pretty much fine. I really had no idea that one man's passion, one man's sacrifice, one man's mission in life (in this case not an understatement), was so critical to ensuring that today some 250 Bermuda Petrels can enjoy soaring over the North Atlantic.

That man is David Wingate who, in the early 1950s as a teenager, accompanied a pair of ornithologists to a speck of rock in Castle Harbour, Bermuda and did the unthinkable, they found a live Bermuda Petrel, the first time one was recorded in over 300 years. Since that moment, Wingate became obsessed with the plight of the petrel. He even went so far as to move his home closer to theirs, setting up shop on Nonsuch Island, a no frills, no utilities, windswept rock where he was, initially, the only permanent human resident.

Wingate lived on Nonsuch on and off, mainly on, until 2002, passing the baton of petrel stewardship to the present Bermuda Conservation Officer, Jeremy Madeiros.

Now one might think that a book on this subject could be rather dry and possibly filled with a good deal of scientific information, like a chart of petrel wing chord comparisons or something (there is not, by the way). This is where *Rare Birds* will surprise you, for the book is really three stories in one. Gerhman does a masterful job of intertwining the natural history of Bermuda, fascinating in its own right, with the life history of the petrel, again quite interesting, but tying it all together is the story of a man's life. Filled with elation, such as seeing birds return to the island for the first time after fledging years before, to tragedy, like that the Wingate family experienced during the summer of 1973, we see the Bermuda Petrel through the eyes of the man who gave up so much in order to give the birds a chance at survival.

While it is certainly heart-warming to know that the petrels enjoy a high level of protection today, and that their future is as bright as it can be for a species with a world population that numbers in the low hundreds, it is also cautionary to read how close man came to rendering the Bermuda Petrel extinct, time and again. These lessons can of course be applied to other at-risk species, and it is gratifying and empowering to understand that one person can make a difference, and that one person can be anyone who applies themselves with the level of persistence and passion exhibited by Wingate.

With the Gulf Stream off North Carolina being one of the very few places that birders can hope to see a Bermuda Petrel, this book is especially relevant to those of us here in the Carolinas. I sincerely hope that you have an opportunity to read *Rare Birds*, and that it has the same impact on you as on me.

Wings Over Water 2012

The 16th annual Wings Over Water festival celebrating the wildlife of Eastern North Carolina was held in early November. As is often the case, the "water" part caused a bit of a challenge. In this case the water itself was long gone, but the impact to the narrow barrier islands remained. The water came from Hurricane Sandy as it passed offshore to an eventual rendezvous with the New Jersey coast. Ocean overwash, a common occurrence on NC 12 south of the Pea Island Visitor Center, sufficiently rearranged the roadway that vehicular access to points south was not possible. With road closures beginning at the north end of the Bonner Bridge over Oregon Inlet, many of the sites normally visited during the festival were not accessible. Festival management performed admirably, contacting participants to rearrange schedules, and by general consensus, even without access to the south end of Oregon Inlet and the Pea Island NWR, the festival was a great success.

Excellent birding at Alligator River NWR helped fill the void, with flooded fields off River Road hosting a concentration of shorebirds not often found in the area. Visitors wowed at the close-up views of sandpipers, plovers, and other birds with a love for shallow freshwater. Just to keep things interesting, a mother bear and cubs could frequently be found just down from the shorebirds.

The festival's keynote speaker, John Sill, provided a hilarious overview of "Little-Known and Seldom-Seen" birds, capping an enchanting evening of socialization at the North Carolina Aquarium.

Planning is already under way for the 17th edition of Wings Over Water, which will be held slightly earlier in 2013, so keep an eye out for announcements and registration information.

Happy New Year!
Warm Wishes for a Prosperous 2013

Executive Committee Changes

The beginning of the new year brings a pair of changes to the CBC Executive Committee.

Samir Gabriel replaces **Judi Durr** as the Club's Treasurer. Judi's efforts to help modernize our bookkeeping, registration, and member services were instrumental in realizing the improvements we are enjoying today. Samir's background in accounting and management will no doubt be warmly welcomed as he works to build on the work of those who served in the past. *Editor's Note: I can personally vouch for Samir being a good guy. Last spring I drove off with his freshly-brewed cup of coffee perched on the bumper. Needless to say it did not make it very far before becoming part of the landscape. Samir's response was a laugh and a chuckle. I'm not sure if it was the thrill of seeing the pair of stately Trumpeter Swans on the pond in front of us or not, but anyone who does not bemoan the loss of a hot cup of Joe after being up since o' dark thirty watching grouse gets a plus mark in my book!*

On the publication side of the house, **Kent Fiala** ends his run as editor of The Chat, the official publication of the Carolina Bird Club. Kent picked up the duties of editor from Bob Wood ten years ago and has ensured that each of the quarterly issues comes to you in a timely manner and with varied and interesting content. Kent passes the torch to **Don Seriff**. Don's first issue of The Chat will be Volume 77, Number 1 Winter 2013. Kent remains as the webmaster of the Carolina Bird Club website www.carolinabirdclub.org.

LeGrand Honored

Dr. Harry E. LeGrand Jr., long time North Carolina Bird Records Committee member and well-known birder, was honored recently for his work in the field of wildlife conservation. LeGrand received the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award from the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission for his dedication to the preservation and conservation of wildlife in North Carolina. LeGrand is only the seventh person to receive this honor. Congratulations, Harry!

CBC Website Enhancements

The Club continues to modernize some of the tasks that heretofore were only performed via the mail. In this day of e-everything, where folks frequently check the internet to see how warm it is instead of stepping outside, you might reasonably expect to be able to pay your annual dues online with a credit card. Well, now you can. Just go to http://www.carolinabirdclub.org and click on the "Join the CBC" link that is in the upper left corner of every page. While the link is labeled "Join the CBC", it is for renewing members as well as new members.

Members may now also submit change of address requests online by clicking on the "Change of Address Form" on the "About the Club" tab.

If you have not visited the website recently, some relatively recent features may be of interest to you as well. The ever-expanding Photo Gallery features an educational "Flashcard Mode" that allows you to identify a bird in a randomly selected photo, and then click the "Reveal Text" button to confirm your ID.

One of the most exciting recent additions to the site is the hosting of Birds of North Carolina: Their Distribution and Abundance. This easy-to-navigate tool provides a commentary on each species found in North Carolina with notes on distribution and abundance in each of the state's three geographical provinces. For uncommon or unusual species, tips on finding representatives of the species are included.

If you have not visited recently, log in, there is much to discover and enjoy!

Welcome New Members!

The CBC warmly welcomes the following new members.

Daniel Edgeworth
Beaufort, SC

Kate Sheehan
Anderson, SC

Ornithology Library
Peabody Museum
Yale University,
New Haven, CT

Tom and Carla Ledford
Monroe, NC

Jim Guyton
Charlotte, NC

Spencer Mortensen
Holly Springs, NC

Samuel Messinides
Camden, SC

Jessica Porter
Lexington, SC

Cynthia and Vincent DiMattia
Greensboro, NC

Jamie Thomas
Charleston, SC

Carolina Gilmore
Durham, NC

Bud and Janice Weakland
Whitmire, SC

Jim and Shirley Barborak
Jamestown, NC

Susan Hamilton
Columbia, SC

Tom Fanslow
Asheville, NC

James and Beverly Seiferheld
Charlotte, NC

James Brailsford
Edisto Island, SC

Judith Meyer
Washington, NC

Mark and Alison Whitaker
Statesville, NC

Scott Winton
Durham, NC

Stacia Ballew
Charleston, SC

Lawrence and Diane Zoller
Apex, NC

Lauren Mobley
Rock Hill, SC

Pam Ford
Charleston, SC

Fred and Marcia Scheideman
Hickory, NC

Sara Hartnett
Greensboro, NC

Karen and Mark Hogan
Chapel Hill, NC

Chris and Noah Clack
Gray Court, SC

Ramona Bearor
South Glens Falls, NY

Lon McCauley
Raleigh, NC

Richard Jackson
Etowah, SC

Ken and Edna Lewis
Taylors, SC

Meta Harker
Frankfort, KY

Denise Williams
Lenoir, NC

Sam Upchurch
Durham, NC

Robert Blohme
Bennett, NC

Joe Blackburn and Pam Rhodes
Charleston, SC

Tom and Ruby Austin
Blythewood, SC

Linda Montgomery
Clemson, SC

Changes to By-laws and Dues Schedule

As noted in the December 2012 issue of The Newsletter, The Executive Committee is proposing changes to the Carolina Bird Club Bylaws and dues schedule. The changes proposed are intended (1) to make the dues structure easier to understand and simplify the categories and (2) to increase slightly the Life membership dues to recognize increasing costs. The Carolina Bird Club membership will be asked to vote to approve these changes at the Winter Meeting in Nags Head in late January 2013.

The Executive Committee proposes amending Article II. Membership and Dues and Article III. Member Voting Privileges by (1) eliminating the Associate and Sustaining categories, (2) adding a Family category and (3) confirming the Associate Life category. Family membership will cover any number of people who reside at the same address. Specifically the Executive Committee proposes the following amended wording:

> *Article II. Membership and Dues, Paragraph 2: Memberships are available in the following dues-bearing categories: a. Individual (also available to non-profit organizations), b. Family (also available to commercial business entities), c. Student, d. Patron, e. Life, f. Associate Life (in household with Life Member)*
>
> *Article III. Member Voting Privileges, Paragraph 1:*
> *On items presented to CBC members for action, one vote may be cast by persons 15 years old and older for each paid-up membership in the categories listed below. In the case of paid-up Family membership, one vote may be cast by each person 15 years old and older covered by the membership. Commercial business entities and non-profit organizations may not cast votes. a. Individual, b. Family, c. Student, d. Patron, e. Life, f. Associate Life (in household with Life Member)*

In addition, the Executive Committee proposes the following dues schedule to be effective January 26, 2013:

Category	Amount	Frequency
Individual	$25	Annual
Family	$30	Annual
Student	$15	Annual
Patron	$50	Annual
Life	$500	Payable as a lump sum or in 4
Associate Life (in the same household with a Life Member)	$100	Payable as a lump sum or in 4

Online Publications Password Change Reminder!

The most recent editions of the Newsletter and The Chat are online on the CBC website. All CBC members will use the same username and password to access these publications. **The username and password changed on November 30!** The new username is "**cbc**" and the password is "**thech@**". This is a membership benefit, please don't share the password with nonmembers! The password will be changed from time to time, but can always be found in the most recent print edition of the Newsletter.

http://www.carolinabirdclub.org

CCB Biologist Reunites with Hope

Bryan D. Watts

Editor's Note: The CBC Newsletter featured Hope in several previous articles. This is an update on the now-famous Whimbrel that has provided much insight into shorebird migration. Since Hope's transmitter is no longer functional, we may not have any further updates, but imagine that Hope will enjoy many future summers in the North and winters in the Tropics.

Fletcher Smith from The Center for Conservation Biology traveled 1,500 miles to St. Croix in November to catch up with a Whimbrel named Hope. Since capturing Hope on May 19, 2009 in Virginia and fitting her with a satellite transmitter, Smith and a team of researchers have tracked the bird for more than 50,000 miles (80,000 kilometers) back and forth four times between breeding grounds on the Mackenzie River Delta in the Northwest Territories of Canada and her winter territory on Great Pond, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. During that time Hope made extraordinary flights over the open ocean, encountered several major storms, and along with two dozen other tracked birds, has revealed important details of migration previously unknown to science.

Smith traveled to St. Croix in November to capture Hope again and remove the transmitter that had stopped transmitting. Hope's signal was lost shortly after her arrival on Great Pond in early September. From observations and photographs made by local researcher Lisa Yntema it became clear that the transmitter's antenna had broken off. Plans were made and coordinated with local officials to capture Hope in an effort to remove her transmitter. With assistance from local biologists, Smith sat in a blind for more than two days watching noose carpets placed in Hope's favorite foraging and roosting locations. Hope was captured on the morning of November 20. Her transmitter was removed but leg bands and her identifying color coded flag were left in place for future identification.

Removal of the transmitter marks the end of the most successful tracking effort of a shorebird to date, but not the end of Hope. She will continue to be searched for along Box Tree Creek in Virginia during spring migration and on her winter territory in Great Pond for years to come.

CBC Seeks Headquarters Secretary

As of press time, the Carolina Bird Club is seeking a part time bookkeeper/secretary to perform the following functions, plus other duties as needed:

- Using Quickbooks, record receipts and disbursements and provide reporting. Process new memberships and membership renewals using hardcopy forms and online payments. Reconcile monthly bank statements.
- Send notices to members when their dues need to be paid; track membership. Send new member welcome packages.
- Manage enrolments for each of the three annual seasonal meetings, updating the registration website and providing reporting. Prepare participant packets for each meeting. Attendance at each meeting is desirable to manage and coordinate the check-in desk.
- Liaison with CBC Newsletter editot, Chat Editor and printer for Club mailings.
- Manage registration and payments for bonus field trips.
- Attend annual planning meetings.

Please note that the preferred candidate can make a multiyear commitment of no less than three years. This position is one of two signatories on the Club's operating account, and his/her address is used by the USPS for the Newsletter and The Chat. The weekly time commitment varies. It can be as little as 5-6 hrs/week or 20-25+ hrs/week leading up to the three seasonal meetings. Compensation is $500.00/month. Please note that this position is considered an independent contractor, not an employee of the Club.
Interested?
Contact: Samir.Gabriel@itg-global.com

Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
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Upcoming CBC Meetings

Asheville, NC May 3-4, 2013
Litchfield, SC Fall 2013

CBC Board Members

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Lexington, SC 803-996-0480
mclark66@sc.rr.com

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Editor of *CBC Newsletter*, Steven Shultz
4201 Sentimental Lane, Apex, NC 27539
919-779-2826, newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of December, February, April, June, August, and October.
Headquarters Secretary, Katherine Higgins, Wilmington, NC
hq@carolinabirdclub.org

CBC Website: www.carolinabirdclub.org

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